

27th August 1926]

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—“ Sir, with reference to the table which is printed on pages 297–298 of the answers, will the hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to explain why in the taluk boards of Coimbatore, Gobichettipalayam, Erode, Pollachi and Kollegal, where there are so many highly cultured and advanced Indian Christians, there are no Indian Christians in any of those boards? ”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—“ The appointments of members of taluk boards are made by presidents of district boards.”

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—“ This Council is perfectly aware of that fact. But when there is a clear omission on the part of the district board president to nominate a single member of the Indian Christian community in all those taluk boards, will the hon. the Minister explain why they were not appointed? ”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—“ It is a matter left to the discretion of the president of the district board.”

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—“ Is it not laid down in the statute that these minority communities must find representation on the local bodies? ”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—“ What is laid down in the provisions of the Act is that regard must be had to representation of minority communities.”

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—“ When the president of the district board is deliberately disobeying such a provision, is not the hon. the Minister competent to enquire into such a matter? ”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—“ From time to time, the Government have been issuing instructions to the presidents of district boards.”

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—“ When the presidents persistently disobey, as in the case of Coimbatore and some other districts, does it not behove on the part of the Government to take serious notice of this neglect of the rule? ”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—“ Government take notice of those things. But there is no provision in the Act to enable the Government to inflict punishment on them. It is for the electorate to take these things into consideration.”

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—“ Why should not the Government make necessary legislation when experience has shown this defect? ”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ That is a suggestion for action.”

Amendment of the Madras Municipalities Act.

* 2368 Q.—Rao Sahib P. V. GOPALAN : Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government have consulted the opinion of all the municipal councils in this Presidency regarding the amendment to the Madras Municipalities Act in regard to making the Revenue Officer responsible to Government and independent of the councils;

(b) how many municipal councils are in favour of the proposal as a whole, how many for a portion of the proposal and how many are against the proposal; and

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(c) whether the Government have finally decided the question, whether final orders have been issued to the municipalities and, if so, which municipalities are going to have the Revenue Officers?

A.—(a) & (b) The Bill was published and thereafter 37 municipal councils expressed their views on the amendment. Two of them were for the amendment and the rest against it.

(c) The final decision of the question will rest with the Legislative Council, when the Bill is introduced in the Council.

Nomination of an Indian Christian to Trichinopoly District Board.

* 2369 Q.—MR. J. A. SALDANHA: With reference to his answers to several points in connexion with question No. 1735 given on 23rd March 1926, will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether an Indian Christian has been nominated to any vacancy on the District Board of Trichinopoly; and

(b) if not, for what reasons?

A.—(a) The answer is in the negative.

(b) Since March last no suitable opportunity has occurred for the nomination of an Indian Christian.

MR. J. A. SALDANHA:—“Here is another instance of a district board, and I want to know why Government have made no nominations of Indian Christians to the Trichinopoly District Board. It is well known that Trichinopoly has got two first-grade colleges belonging to Indian Christians. Why was not a single Indian Christian appointed to the district board?”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL:—“The answer has already been given. No suitable vacancy has occurred.”

MR. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR:—“May I know if it is a fact that no vacancy has occurred in the district board?”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL:—“It does not mean that there was no vacancy. There was no *suitable* vacancy.”

MR. J. A. SALDANHA:—“May I know whether there was no Indian Christian vacancy during the last three years on the district board? If there was a vacancy, why no Indian Christian was appointed?”

MR. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR:—“I ask for more light as regards the suitability. I do not really follow what the hon. Minister means by saying ‘suitable vacancy’.”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL:—“The fact of the matter is that there was a vacancy, and it was filled up by a retired president. By convention we have been appointing retired chairmen or presidents as members of the board when vacancies arise.”

MR. J. A. SALDANHA:—“May I inquire who is a retired president? Is it a fact that he generally refuses or is reluctant to be on the board?”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL:—“Government have no information, Sir.”